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MONTANA LABOR MARKET

Monthly Review of EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK, LABOR SUPPLY, LABOR DEMAND, CURRENT EMPLOYMENT

MONTANA STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

Division of Unemployment Compensation Commission of Montana

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FL-177.



NOVEMBER, 1957

Seasonal Decline Begun In Montana Employment

Receding employment levels as the fall season advances were reflected in October estimates of non-farm employment in Montana, as released in this issue. The mid-month figure is set at 172,000 wage earners, 3,200 down from September's 175,200. A year ago the September-October decline was 3,300, two years ago the spread was 3,900, the average since 1950 has been 2.500 fewer at work in October than in September.

Trade Down 1,600 in October

The forces engaged in trade show the greatest dip, with 1,600 fewer on the payroll in October than in September. Service industries also took a 1,300 loss for the period. Both are affected by the ending of the tourist season and by the decreased employment in basic industries of metal mining and lum-bering. Contract construction is down 900 from September, largely due to seasonal reactions. A 200 loss is shown in transportation, and 100 in mining.

Several Gains Recorded

Industries registering an increase over September include manufacturing with a net gain of 500. This is attained in the face of a 400 drop in lumber and logging employment. Processing of sugar beets at employment. Processing of sugar beets at the several refining plants produced an off-setting gain of 900 workers in the manufacturing division. This, too, is a seasonal operation, for a sixty to ninety day period. Government employment went up by 400, state and local employees increased by 1,000, largely non-teaching jobs with the schools, and federal employment receded 600, the seasonal effect of forest fire and forest maintenance. forest maintenance.

1,600 Below Year Ago

On an annual cycle basis the October employment is down 1,600 from a year ago. Metal mining is a principal contribu-tor to that decline, with 2,400 fewer on payroll this fall than last. This decline began in July, the result of market and price conditions unfavorable to full produc-tion. Lumber and logging, also afflicted by a slow market, is 300 below its year ago employment. Transportation is down 500. mostly in the railroad division and due to technological changes in operational procedures. Trade employment is down 400, probably a reflection of decreased volume due to curtailed mine operations and lumber-

Construction Up from Year Ago

Contract construction employed 100 more workers this October than last, though 900 below the September figure. Service industries were also using more manpower this year than last, by 700, though showing a decline of 1,300 from September. Finance and insurance climbed by 200 on the annual cycle, while government employment registered an 800 increase.

OCTOBER LABOR SUPPLY IS A MONTH AHEAD OF NORMAL SEASONAL PATTERN OF LAYOFFS

October labor supply in Montana, already at record proportions when the month began, grew to a ponderous eight thousand jobseekers at the end of the month. This is double that of October's end in any other year since 1949. Seasonally, the employment decline is more than a month advanced over the normal seasonal layoff period, as measured by volume of applicants for work in offices of the employment service in the state. Claims for unemployment compensation confirm the increased and earlier unemployment this year, with 5,800 applying for job insurance as of November 1, against 1,800 a year ago and less than 1,000 in 1953.

Mining Employment Decline Continues

Summer and fall declines in both mining and lumber employment, due to unsatisfactory market conditions in their products, were followed by still further inroads upon payrolls during October. At the same time the effects of idleness in these basic industries were communicating to channels of trade and service, and even into the construction and transportation fields, and resulting in employment cutbacks there.

Work-Applicant Count in Review

	1957	1956	1955	1954	1953	1952	1951
January	14,972	12,676	12,887	12,270	10,616	10,370	11,685
March	14,930	12,663	11,979	11,075	9,323	9,392	10,844
May	9,032	5,105	5,565	6,191	4,324	3,276	4,312
July	6,419	3,807	4,628	4,283	3,249	2,191	3,260
September	6,328	2,889	2,781	3,782	2,888	1,388	2,304
October	8,041	3,763	3,348	4,038	2,688	1,955	2,572
November	10,200*	6,453	6,968	5,617	5,048	4,135	4,341

*Estimate More Jobseekers in October

Increase of 1,700 in work-applicants during October over September compares with a 900 increase in the same period last fall and from 300 to 600 normally. Weather conditions were about normal as related to their effect upon employment conditions in outdoor activities, hence are not an unusual factor in bringing about the increase in unemployment.

Construction Layoffs Yet to Come

Extensive layoffs in construction crews may be expected during November and December, as weather conditions may dictate. Some seasonal releases are already evident, the crews at Noxon dam have been receding about 100 a week, while paving and road surfacing at various points in the state have also been discontinued until warmer temperatures prevail. The power dam at Great Falls is approaching completion and the same is true of the power plant at Sidney. Glasgow operations on a new airbase and power plant have been a sustaining influence in the general construction picture. Some of this work is expected to continue through the winter.

Less Highway Employment

Highway and bridge building in the state system used 810 men on construction and 720 on maintenance during October, as compared with 1,070 and 850 a year ago. Work was in progress on 220 miles of highway contracts and bridges contracted at \$5,000,-000. Eight small road and bridge contracts were completed during the month. Awaiting execution are contracts on 132 miles of high-way construction and bridges to cost \$2,- 500,000; some of these will not be active employment projects until spring.

Some Winter Building Prospects

Other construction employment over the state is afforded by school and public buildings under way, commercial structures, and housing units. Some winter employment will be furnished by such of these buildings as are enclosed in time to permit finishing work to go on through the severe weather. Reports indicate less prospect of winter construction work than a year ago.

Two Short-time Industries Help

Christmas tree harvest is affording employment in most of the timbered areas of the state, a short-time industry which operates from mid-October through part of December. Another fall and early winter operation furnishing employment from October through part or all of December is the processing of beets into sugar.

Butte Leads in Jobseekers

Increases in the surplus labor supply from October of 1956 are quite general over the entire state, in varying degrees. Two employment offices, Hamilton and Miles City, showed fewer jobscekers this year than last. Butte, on the other hand, has six times as many seeking work this year, largely because of the decline in mining employment and its effects on community economy. Butte has 1,757 this October, 270 a year ago.

Other Areas Have Oversupply

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Other areas with oversupply of work-applicants include Great Falls with 1,029, up
609 from a year ago; Missoula, 782, up 388;
Kalispell, 792, up 334; Billings, 947, up 260;
Helena, 336, up 217; and Anaconda, 244, up 190.

3 0864 1004 5108 0 Along the Hiring Line-Field Summary, Nov. 1

ANACONDA, Deer Lodge, Philipsburg —(244 jobseekers, 89 new; 150 men, 94 women). Transient flow continues heavy, mostly seeking farm jobs, demand at minimum. Smelter employment continues de-cline by about 50 in October. Construction season about ended, crews being released. Hiring for trade and service establishments is slow.

BILLINGS, Columbus, Hardin, Hysham, Laurel, Red Lodge, Roundup—(947 job-seekers, 558 new; 573 men. 374 women). Construction employment declined in late October with unfavorable weather, should hold about present level through November. No new contracts for starting this fall. Home building program at low ebb. Courthouse, airport building, hospital addition and a state structure in progress. Two Roundup coal mines reopened and called back 115 workers. No railroad hiring of consequence. Beet harvest retarded but ample labor supply

BOZEMAN, Ennis, Three Forks, Trident –(323 jobseekers, 197 new; 182 men, 141 women). Adequate labor supply for all expected demands. Water and sewer projects fully staffed. Work started on classroom building and new dairy barn at college. A store remodeling job occupies a dozen workmen. Clearing is under way for new road project. Alfalfa mill finishing its season, will cut crew of 28 in half for

BUTTE, Virginia City, Whitehall—(1,757 jobseekers, 524 new; 1,417 men, 340 women). Mining employment unchanged from September. Decline begun in July shows no upward turn. Some idle miners transferred to railroad maintenance and other outside jobs. Trade and service employment reduced as result of mining situation. A new supermarket completed and employs staff of 35. Construction crews are being reduced with approach of winter and end of building scason.

CUT BANK—(144 jobseekers, 81 new; 104 men, 40 women). Construction employment increased in October, with work started on a new store and gymnasium. A labor dispute halted extensive remodeling work in Glacier Park. Railroad hired additional maintenance men to finish season work on the rail lines. Oil well drilling subsided with first harbingers of winter and road construction and maintenance work is diminishing.

DILLON—132 jobseekers, 74 new; 87 men, 45 women). Hay and grain harvest completed in early October, many of the released workers left for other areas. Heavy hay yields produced a greater tonnage of winter feed than normal, some feeding be-

LABOR MARKET INDICATORS

Employment—	Oct. 1957	Sept. 1957	Oct. 1956	Oct. Avg. 1950-1956
Industrial Employment	172,000 3,844	175,200 3,775	173,600 3,110	159,400 2,477
New Job Applications	8,041	6,328	3,763	3,078
Insured Unemployment-	Nov. 1 1957	Oct. 4 1957	Nov. 2 1956	Avg. 1st Nov. Wk. 1950-1956
New and Renewal Claims	1,198	808	721	490
Unemployed Weeks Filed Total Unemployment Claims	4,641 5,839	3,047 3,855	1,080 1,801	1,126 1,616

Power line about one-fourth done, will continue most of winter. Street finishing deferred until next spring. Crews are starting on a thirty mile road project at the state boundary. Several small mines closed on account of market levels.

GLASGOW, Fort Peck, Malta, Opheim-(83 jobseekers, 62 new; 50 men, 33 women). Lack of applicants through October, influx from other areas virtually ceased. Construction labor demand held up well at the air base and the power project at Fort Peck. Paving job in Glasgow finished, releasing 70. Work continues on telephone building with crew of 25 and 13 residence units under way. Farm demand negligible, harvest and fall work completed earlier than normal.

GLENDIVE, Circle, Wibanx — (99 jobseckers, 104 new; 51 men, 48 women). Oil field labor demand down some in October, seasonal. New service station begun, big bridge job now awaiting arrival of steel. Railroad employment below normal, with no appreciable demand through October. Farm demand spirited for harvest of beets and potatoes and fall tilling, beginning to recede with cooler weather.

GREAT FALLS, Choteau, Fort Benton, Stanford—(1,029 jobseekers, 490 new; 761 men, 268 women). Labor supply is about two and a half times the figure of a year ago. In-migration is heavy, especially from other Montana points. Some hiring in shops for the Christmas season. Smelter employment continues light. Construction of new dam is well along, will be releasing some workers shortly. City paving job completed, crew of 200 terminated. Decrease of 400 in civilian crews at airbase. Farm employment well up to normal, stimulated by in-creased potato acreage, harvest about com-

HAMILTON, Stevensville — (167 jobseckers, 35 new; 113 men, 54 women). In creased hiring for potato picking and beet handling, Christmas Tree harvest, and service establishments noted in October. Mining and trade demands reduced. Beet run concludes in November. Railroad maintenance employs fewer than usual. Lumber and logging unchanged as the layoff season approaches, and contract construction is showing signs of tapering off for the winter

HAVRE, Chinook, Harlem — (137 jobseekers, 110 new; 105 men, 32 women). Railroad shops working with reduced crews, extra gangs being maintained in the field as long as possible, probably about mid-November. Some farmers have rock picking crews in the field, also to finish shortly.

HELENA, Boulder, Garrison, Townsend, White Sulphur Springs — (336 jobseekers, 250 new; 249 men, 87 women). Construction employment fell with weather which halted city street paving and some other outdoor work. Work has resumed on the valley irrigation system, though hiring is desultory. Potato harvest provided short time employment during October.

KALISPELL, Columbia Falls, Eureka, Libby, Whitefish—792 jobseekers, 241 new; 525 men, 267 women). Construction activity flurried in October, in anticipation of winter and to get projects finished. Logging and lumbering continued at slow pace, with many small mills closed for the winter or longer and others reduced forces and fewer working hours. Christmas tree hiring holstered the labor market to some extent, for its six-week season.

LEWISTOWN, Harlowton, Ryegate, Winnett—134 jobseekers, 78 new; 96 men, 38 women). Some construction layoffs in October, but most resumed after weather settled. Flour mill at Harlowton closed for a year period. Cafe employment in Lewistown reduced to winter schedule. Farm labor demand is at seasonal low. All occupational skills in surplus.

LIVINGSTON, Big Timber — (190 jobseekers, 110 new; 138 men, 52 women). More than adequate labor supply. Construction in Yellowstone Park closed for the winter, though projects in the valley are still operating, including highway jobs, telephone building and warehouse. Railroad layoffs have nearly all been recalled, extra

EIGHT YEARS OF MONTANA INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT TOTALS, BY MONTHS (in Thousands)

Ja	an.	Feb.	March	A pril	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Aver.
1950 13	33.2	132.2	135.2	142,1	147.3	153.6	154.9	157.1	156.8	152.2	150.7	148.8	147.0
1951	11.9	139.4	140.3	145.9	149.4	154.1	153.5	154.6	154.3	152.4	151.7	150.6	149.0
1952 14	10.5	140.7	143.0	149.7	154.8	159.9	159.5	161,2	160.4	157.9	156.0	154.9	153.2
1953 14	15.8	144.5	146.3	149.7	153.1	158.0	158.5	160.6	160.3	159.6	157.6	156.4	154.2
1954	16.7	145.5	147.2	151.1	155.7	161.6	164.1	165.4	154.8	153.9	158.2	155.7	155.0
1955 14	18,4	146.8	147.4	153.4	158.4	166.8	168.2	170.4	169.8	165.9	162.4	160.3	159.8
1956 15	54.3	152.1	154.2	160.7	167.0	175.0	175.7	177.5	176.9	173.6	167.9	165.2	166.7
	59.0	157.8	158.6	163.0	168.6	174.8	176.9	176.8	175.2	172.0			

Along the Hiring Line—Field Summary, Nov. 1

(Continued from Page Two)

gangs still working. Sawmill and wood crews at full strength, not much hiring.

MILES CITY, Baker, Broadus, Ekalaka, Forsyth, Jordan, Terry — 102 jobseekers, 86 new; 68 men, 34 women). Construction men returning from summer work in other areas, local demand all supplied. Trade and service establishments fully staffed, some minor reductions may be expected. Farm employment is more stable in nature than year ago, better crops.

MISSOULA, Drummond, Arlee, Superior—(782 jobseekers, 386 new; 535 men, 247 women). Christmas tree hiring was an active factor in the labor market in October. Railroad staffing has not been up to expectations. Sugar beet operations opened on schedule in early October, with more applicants than jobs. A new shopping center is about complete. Lumber hiring is sporadic, below normal for the season. Transients

POLSON—(231 jobseekers, 74 new; 201 men, 30 women). Labor surplus is growing. Lumber and logging employment is slow, few replacements. One plywood mill employing 100 men has gone on half-time, may close entirely for the winter. A sawmill using 42 men started work again after a temporary shutdown. Christmas tree harvest is active. Harvest of apples and potatoes in October furnished outlet for some of labor suply.

SHELBY, Chester, Courad — (115 jobseekers, 75 new; 76 men, 39 women). Seasonal layoffs in the oil fields has begun. Construction continues at full pace, with hospital and school additions at Conrad nearly finished, at Shelby a hospital project is under way, a commercial building being rebuilt, and eight residences well along. Highway jobs were interrupted by adverse weather. Railroad construction halted for the winter. Short of skilled auto mechanics. Farm demand light.

SIDNEY—(57 jobseekers, 61 new; 30 men, and 27 women over 45). Opening of sugar plant in October drew some workers from construction field, necessitating replacements. Lodge hall is nearly finished, several homes well under way, and the power plant construction crews are being maintained at nearly summer strength. Beet harvest and processing is main factor in labor market here.

THOMPSON FALLS, Hot Springs—(150 jobseekers, 73 new; 104 men, 46 women). Crews employed on the Noxon dam project are being trimmed about 100 a week. The railroad and highway re-location jobs about completed and the whole project about half way to the finish. No new contracts expected until spring. Only current demand is for carpenters. Woods work fairly steady, two sawmills have been idle for repair jobs. Three new residences finished, street repair job wound up for the season.

WOLF POINT, Plentywood, Scobey—(90 jobseekers, 66 new; 62 men, 28 women). Increased hiring in October in construction field, starting a new clinic, warehouse, and several residences, as well as a highway contract. Street paving finished for the season. Oil exploration work continues, hiring is for replacement only. Demand for winter ranch hands extremely limited.

ESTIMATED EMPLOYMENT IN NON-AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES IN MONTANA (1)

(Produced in co-operation with United States Bureau of Labor Statistics)

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	EM	PLOYME	Net Change								
INDUSTRY	Oct. 1957 (2)	Sept. 1957 (3)	Oct. 1956	Sep. '57 to Oct. '57	Oct. '56 to Oct. '57						
NONAGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES	172,000	175,200	173,600	3,200	1,600						
Manufacturing	22,400	21,900	22,800	500	-400						
Durable goods	14,000	14,400	14,200	—400	200						
Lumber and timber products Primary metals Other (4)	7,900 4,800 1,300	4,800	8,200 4,700 1,300	00	100						
Nondurable goods	8,400	7,500	8,600	900	200						
Food and kindred products	4,600 1,600 1,200 1,000	1,600 1,200	1,600 1,300	00	-200 00 -100 100						
Mining Metal mining Coal, quarrying and nonmetallic Petroleum-natural gas production	10,100 6,200 1,000 2,900	6,400 900	8,600 1,000	—200 100	-2,400 00						
Contract Construction	14,600 5,400 4,100 5,100	5,500 5,100	5,000	-100 -1,000	900						
Transportation and utilities	21,800 11,900 3,900 6,000	12,100 3,900	4,100	-200 00	-400 -200						
Trade Wholesale trade Retail trade General merchandise and apparel Food stores Eating and drinking establishments Automotive and filling stations Retail trade not elsewhere classified	9,400 32,700 6,100 4,700	9,800 33,900 6,100 4,800 9,400 6,900	9,500 33,000 6,400 5,200 8,100 6,300	-400 -1,200 00 -100 -800 -300	-100 -300 -300 -500 500 300						
Finance, insurance and real estate	5,900	5,900	5,700	00	200						
Services and miscellaneous	22,100 3,100 2,600 16,400	4,100 2,600	3,000 2,400	-1,000 00	200						
Government	33,000 7,800 25,200	8,400	7,800]600	00						
Great Falls Area (Cascade County) Manufacturing Contract construction Transportation and utilities Trade, wholesale and retail Services and miscellaneous (7) Government	20,200 2,800 2,000 2,400 6,400 4,100 2,500	2,900 2,200 2,400 6,500 4,200	3,100 2,300 2,500 6,200 3,900	-100 200 00 100 100	-300 -300 -100 200 200						

- (1) Estimates include all full and part-time wage and salary workers who worked or received pay during the pay period ending nearest the 15th of the month. Proprietors, firm members, personnel of the armed forces, domestic scrvants, and self-employed persons are excluded.
- (2) Preliminary estimates based on return from samples of 601 selected Montana establishments.(3) Figures previously released have been revised on return from 1,006 such establishments.
- (4) Includes fabricated metal products, machinery except electrical, furniture, stone and clay
- (5) Includes apparel, chemicals, and miscellaneous manufacturing products.
- (6) Includes commercial trade schools, auto repair services and garages, miscellaneous repair services and hand trades, motion pictures, amusements and recreation, medical and health, law offices and professional services, nonprofit membership organizations and business not otherwise classified.
- (7) Same as (6) above, also includes finance, real estate and mining.

COMPARISON OF BASIC LABOR MARKET TRANSACTIONS IN NOV., 1957 AND NOV., 1956

Employment	New	New Job Applicants Jobseekers in File						Job Placements						U. I. Claims				
Service	Oct.	1957	Oct.	1956	Oct.	1957	Oct.	1956		Oct.	1957			Oct.	1956		Wk.	11-1
Office	Tot.	Vet.	Tot.	Vet.	Tot.	Vet.	Tot.	Vet.	Ind.	Ag.	Tot.	Vet.	Ind.	Ag.	Tot.	Vet.	1957	1956
					244	0.2	5.1		2.21	307	210	101	241	2701	212	26	122	35
Anaconda	89	26	16	177	244 947	82 241	54 687	186	405	297 274	319 679	10 192	659	278 292	312 951	36 355	133	267
Billings	558	162	572	177		76	264	61	177	527	704	62	178	828	1,006	391	55	59
Bozeman	197	55	127 340	31	323 1.757	642	270	55	109	23	132		214	21	235	101	1,349	151
Butte	524	157		120	1,757	59	64	25	71	20	91	39	35	32	67	38	114	58
Cut Bank	81 74	37 30	46 58	15 23	132	38	57	21	44	63	107	22	41	66	107	56	95	26
Dillon		19	96	28	83	14	59	12	165	18	183		156	164	320	70	96	71
Glasgow	62	-	66	25	99	25	61	20	94	77	171	53	109	53	162	89	28	25
Glendive	104	39 157	367	132	1,029		420	131	249	184	433	104	373	104	477	176		252
Great Falls	490	26	307	15	1,029	50	173	35	45	232	277	16	37	247	284	26	96	43
Hamilton	110	36	88	35	137	55	99	33	157	71	228		144	98	242	112		35
Havre	250	94.	222	94	336		119	40	109	61	170		134	39	173	83		106
Helena	241	60	274	55.	792		458	124	231	41	272		190	35	225	88		166
Kalispell	78	27	51	55	134	43	76	6	61	27	88		79	25	104	49		33
Lewistown	110	25	43	1	190		91	15	66	14	80	25	115	9	124	52	186	
Livingston	86	30	137	48	102	30	138	44	107	43	150		106	60			62	49
Miles City	386	113	305	119	782	243	394	132	194	32	226		330		396			133
Polson	74	16	46	9	231	84	79	14	96	70	166		54	26	80	26		
Shelby	75	27	69	24	115		25	4	131	34	165		114	68	182		100	
	61	8	41	13	57	10	38	11	46	37	83		58	36	94	30	37	29
Sidney Thomp. Falls	73	35	46	iĭ	150		61	17	53	4	57	18	91		91	34	203	
Wolf Point	66		61	16	90		76	26	55	85	140		58	56	114	32		
VV OIL T OILL		_0				1											1	
TOTALS	3,844	1,199	3,110	1,003	8,041	2,548	3,763	1,021	2,687	2,234	4,921	1,208	3,309	2,603	5,912	2,159	5,839	1,801

^{*}Includes 163 claims of Federal Employees UC Program, 59 same a year ago.

AVERAGE HOURS AND EARNINGS IN SELECTED MONTANA INDUSTRIES

(Produced in co-operation with United States Bureau of Labor Statistics) (Hours and earnings data exclude administrative and salaried personnel)

	Average	Weekly 1	Earnings	Averag	e Weekly	Hours	Average Hourly Earnings			
INDUSTRY	Oct. (1) 1957	Sept. (2) 1957	Oct. 1956	Oct. (1) 1957	Sept. (2) 1957	Oet. 1956	Oct. (1) 1957	Sept. (2) 1957	Oct. 1956	
All Manufacturing	\$86.15	\$86.43	\$93.82	39.5	38.7	42.8	\$2.18	\$2.23	\$2.19	
Durable goodsPrimary metals	84.83 87.75	84.89 87.75	96.98 102.77	38.5 38.3	38.6 38.3	43.2 44.3	2.20 2.29	2.20 2.29	2.25 2.32	
Nondurable goodsFood and kindred products	88.69 78.38	89.77 74.02	88.43 74.50	41.3 44.3	39.0 40.5	42.3 43.4	2.15 1.77	2.30 1.83	2.09 1.72	
All Mining	99.33	99.59	105.27	39.4	39.4	41.7	2.52	2.53	2.53	
Metal mining	93.46	93,46	109.04	38.7	38.7	43.2	2.42	2.42	2.52	
Transportation and Utilities (except railrds.)	92.94	92.76	86.90							
Transportation (except railroads)Utilities and communication	120.67 79.83	117.70 81.18	103.84 77.90	39.2	39.3	40.3	2.04	2.06	1.93	

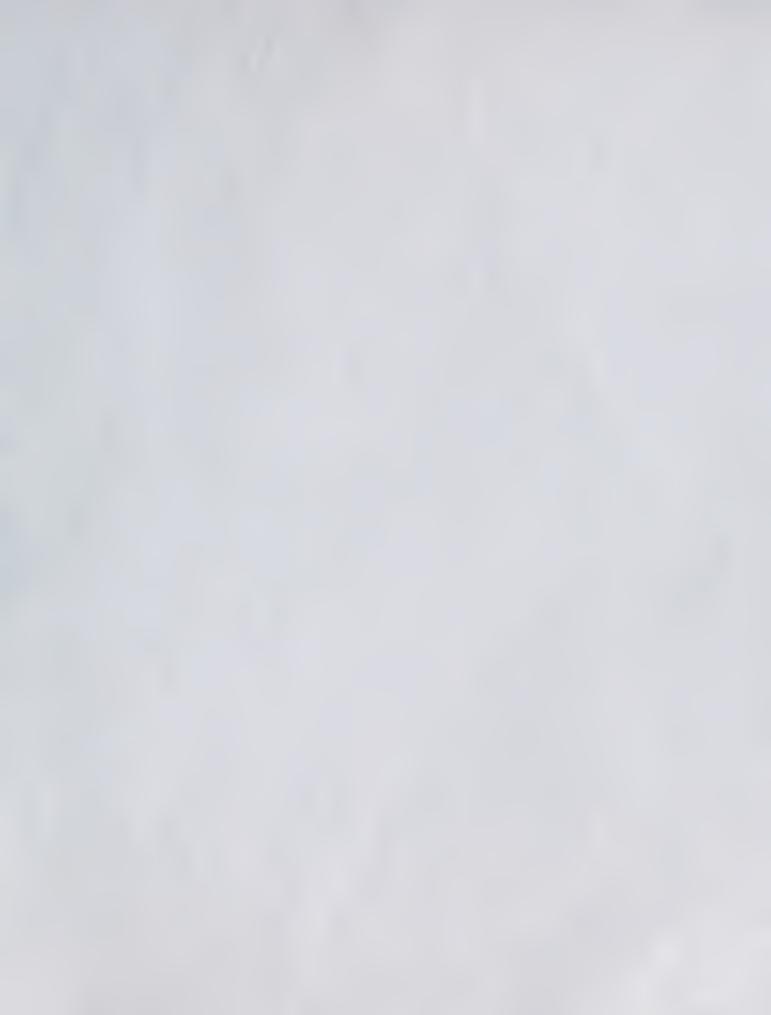
⁽¹⁾ Preliminary estimates. (2) Figures previously released have been revised on more complete returns.

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION COMMISSION OF MONTANA

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